



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 9, 2026 REPORT NO. HRB-26-036

HEARING DATE: September 24, 2026

SUBJECT: **ITEM #5 – HENRY AND MYRTLE DAHN/A.L. AND A.E. DENNSTEDT BUILDING COMPANY HOUSE**

RESOURCE INFO: [California Historical Resources Inventory Database \(CHRID\) link](#)

APPLICANT: John and Denise Madrid; represented by BFS Environmental Services

LOCATION: 2982 Laurel Street, North Park Community, Council District 3
APN 453-702-12-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Henry and Myrtle Dahn/A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company House located at 2982 Laurel Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Henry and Myrtle Dahn/A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company House located at 2982 Laurel Street as a historical resource with a period of significance 1936 under HRB Criterion C for the Spanish Colonial Revival style, and under Criterion D representative of a notable work of established Master Builder A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company. The designation includes the original detached garage. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style and retains integrity from its 1936 period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits an asymmetrical façade, half barrel clay tile roof, exposed rafters, round clay tile attic vents, stucco chimney, focal window, wooden corner windows, a turned wood column, and stucco facades.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company and retains integrity from its 1936 period of significance. Specifically, the house is representative of a notable example of the company's residential work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style with custom features such as a turned wood column porch support, a corner window accentuated by a faux wood post, and a faux chimney.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's desire to have the site designated as a historical resource.

The property was located within the boundary of the [2016 North Park Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey](#), but was not identified in the survey because it was not evaluated.

The historic name of the resource, the Henry and Myrtle Dahn/A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Henry and Myrtle Dahn, who constructed the house as their personal residence, and the name of A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company, an established Master Builder.

In order to be eligible for designation and listing on the City's Register, a resource must meet one or more of the City's designation criteria as specified in the Historical Resources Guidelines of the Land Development Manual and retain integrity as it relates to the significance of the resource. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance, which requires an understanding of the physical features and characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. The National, California, and City of San Diego Registers recognize location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as the seven aspects of historical integrity.

Although not all seven aspects of integrity need to be present for a property to be eligible for designation, the record must demonstrate that the property retains enough physical and design characteristics to reflect and convey the significance of the property. Each resource depends on certain aspects of integrity, more than others, to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects are most important to a particular property requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The [Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria](#) provide information regarding the City's designation criteria, as well as guidance on their application and how to evaluate the integrity of a resource.

ANALYSIS

The property located at 2982 Laurel Street is a one-story, Spanish Colonial Revival style single-family residential building constructed in 1936 in the North Park Community Planning Area. Other structures present on site include a detached garage. The property is located west of the Burlingame neighborhood near the intersection of 30th Street. The property is in its original location.

Since its construction in 1936, the property has been modified as follows: Between 1963 and 1970, an awning was added to the focal window on the front façade, which was removed before 2008 before a new awning was added in 2023. Prior to 2008, gutters were added to the front façade, the original front door was replaced with a solid wood door, and the garage door was replaced with a metal door. In 2023, a new front-yard stucco fence, a wooden gate, brick pavers, and an east-side yard air-conditioning unit were added.

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by BFS Environmental Services, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A, C, and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria C and D, but not HRB Criterion A. This

determination is consistent with the [Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria](#), as follows.

CRITERION A - *Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development.*

The historical report finds the subject property eligible for designation under HRB Criterion A for Architectural Development because it is the only known example of Spanish Colonial Revival construction by A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company in the North Park area.

A resource eligible for designation under Architectural Development shall exemplify or reflect development associated with the City's built environment, especially that designed and constructed by non-architects, including real estate developers, contractors, speculators, homeowners, and others associated with the building industry. Furthermore, it must exemplify or reflect *special elements* of the City's, a community's, or a neighborhood's development. *Special elements* of development refer to a resource that is distinct among others of its kind or that surpasses the usual in significance. It is not enough for a resource to simply reflect an aspect of development, as all buildings, structures, and objects do.

The property, being the only known example of a Spanish Colonial Revival style building in North Park by the A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company, does not qualify as a *special element* of North Park or the City's development. Additionally, it is not distinct among or surpasses the significance of other Spanish Colonial Revival residences in North Park or the City. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion A. As the property is not significant under Criterion A, an evaluation of integrity as it relates to Criterion A is not relevant or required.

CRITERION C - *Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of natural materials or craftsmanship.*

The property is a one-story stucco residence with a combination of hipped and gabled tile roofs. The eaves are accentuated by projecting rafter ends. At the gable ends, round clay tile attic vents are present. One stucco chimney is located at the west (side) elevation. A false chimney is located on the opposite façade on the east elevation. The front gable contains a large rectangular focal window. The entry is formed by an extended shed-roof cover, set atop a projecting beam and a turned wooden column. A prominent corner window set is visible on the front elevation, consisting of two double-hung windows united by a decorative faux wood post. The remaining fenestration on the residence is simple one-over-one double-hung wood windows. The front door is a solid wood plank door, and the rear door is a divided-lite wooden French door.

Following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture was revived. What resulted was the Spanish Colonial Revival style, which was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering the architectural landscape until the Modernist movement took hold during and after WWII. The style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. These may be of Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, or Renaissance inspirations, and an unusually rich and varied series of decorative precedents. The style employed a variety of floor plans, as well as gabled, cross-gabled,

gabled and hipped, hipped and flat roof forms with parapets. Other character defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile, focal windows, arched windows and other openings, and accented entries.

The original 1936 detached garage mimics the residence by employing a tile roof trim, projecting rafters, and a false chimney. Although the garage has a contemporary replacement garage door, it contributes to the significance under HRB Criterion C for the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Therefore, staff recommends that it be included in the designation.

Of the seven aspects of integrity, design, materials, and workmanship are the most critical to the property's ability to convey significance under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of Spanish Colonial Revival style. The property, which has been modified as detailed in the beginning of the analysis section of this report, continues to embody its character-defining features to convey its style. The 2023 front yard hardscape and window awning are compatible in design and unobtrusive. The replacement solid wooden front door is compatibly designed with the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The 2023 air conditioning unit is located at the side elevation, where its visibility is reduced. The added gutters obstruct the visibility of the exposed rafters, but are not significant enough to render the property without integrity, even when considering the cumulative impact of alterations. Therefore, the property does retain integrity to its 1936 period of significance under HRB Criterion C.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Colonial Revival style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style, including an asymmetrical façade, half barrel clay tile roof, exposed rafters, round clay tile attic vents, stucco chimney, focal window, wooden corner windows, a turned wood column, and stucco facades. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C for the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

CRITERION D - Is representative of a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

Brothers A.L., C.A., E.L., and A.E. Dennstedt, originally from Minnesota, sold real estate in the Midwest early in the 20th century until the market collapsed in 1923. In 1926, they moved to San Diego and established the Dennstedt Company. They hired skilled architectural drafter Henry Landt to be the director of drafting. The company built custom houses, mainly in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. By 1929, the Dennstedt Company had built hundreds of houses and was advertising itself as the largest homebuilder in San Diego. They were known for building high-quality custom houses of different sizes, hiring skilled craftsmen, and retaining those employees long-term. Henry Landt also kept the company at the cutting edge of innovations in the field. They adopted the business strategy of buying vacant lots in existing subdivisions, finding buyers willing to contract with them to build a house on the lot, and offering clients financing for both the lot purchase and the cost of home construction. In this way, they became prolific builders of custom houses. They also constructed hotels and other commercial buildings.

In 1933, A.L. sold his interest in the company as a result of a dispute with his brothers, likely over whether to enter the tract housing market and work with low-cost FHA loans. In 1934, A.L. recruited Henry Landt and his brother A.E. to join him in forming the "A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company." A.L. and A.E. continued to build custom houses, using their method of selling lots to clients who were willing to contract with them to build their houses. They never built tract housing,

but they eventually began building speculation houses for clients with FHA loans. One of their projects was the Reynard Hills subdivision, which exhibits a variety of architectural styles, including Spanish Eclectic, Monterey, Cape Cod, and Old English. The company lasted until 1941, when residential construction largely stopped as the United States entered World War II, and Landt became a construction engineer for Convair.

The Dennstedt Building Company/A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company/The Original Dennstedt Company was established as a Master Builder in 2007 when the Historical Resources Board designated the [Hazel Weir/Dennstedt Company House/Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya Site #4 \(HRB #818\)](#). The subject property was constructed by the A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company. The subject resource demonstrates the high quality of design and craftsmanship evident in the company's other historically designated works. It most closely resembles the [Ida Loper/A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company House \(HRB #1479\)](#), built one year later in 1937. These two sites share the same exposed rafter design, the same simple shed roof entry supported by wooden columns, and the same corner windows.

Of the seven aspects of integrity, design, materials, and workmanship are the most critical to the property's ability to convey significance under HRB Criterion D as a resource that represents the notable work of Master Builder A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company. The property, which has been modified as detailed in the beginning of the analysis section of this report, retains its character-defining features and designs attributable to the Master. As discussed under the Criterion C analysis, the cumulative alterations do not significantly impact the building's integrity, design, materials, and workmanship. Therefore, the property does retain integrity to its 1936 period of significance under HRB Criterion D.

Significance Statement: The subject resource is representative of a notable work of established Master Builder A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company and retains integrity to its original 1936 design, intent, and aesthetic. The company was an accomplished builder of custom houses and constructed many high-quality houses in the City, some of which have been historically designated. Specifically, the house is representative of a notable example of the company's residential work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style with custom features such as a turned wood column porch support, corner window accentuated by a faux wood post, and a faux chimney. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D as a notable work of Master Builder A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Designation brings with it the responsibility of maintaining the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The benefits of designation include the availability of the Mills Act Program for reduced property tax; the use of the more flexible Historical Building Code; flexibility in the application of other regulatory requirements; the use of the Historical Conditional Use Permit which allows flexibility of use; and other programs which vary depending on the specific site conditions and owner objectives. If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Henry and Myrtle Dahn/A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company House located at 2982 Laurel Street be designated with a period of significance of 1936 under HRB Criterion C for the Spanish Colonial Revival style, and Criterion D representative of a notable work of established Master Builder A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company. The designation includes the original detached garage.



Alvin Lin
Associate Planner
City Planning Department



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison
City Planning Department

AL/ss

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A

ADOPTED ON 9/24/2026

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 9/24/2026, to consider the historical designation of the **Henry and Myrtle Dahn/A.L. And A.E. Dennstedt Building Company House** (owned by Denise & John C Madrid, 2982 Laurel Street, San Diego, CA 92104) located at **2982 Laurel Street, San Diego, CA 92104**, APN: **453-702-1200**, further described as BLK 4 LOTS 45 & 46 ST CLSD ON S & SLY 60 FT in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California; and

WHEREAS, in arriving at their decision, the Historical Resources Board considered the historical resources report prepared by the applicant, the staff report and recommendation, all other materials submitted prior to and at the public hearing, inspected the subject property and heard public testimony presented at the hearing; and

WHEREAS, the property would be added to the Register of Designated Historical Resources as **Site No. 0**, and

WHEREAS, designated historical resources located within the City of San Diego are regulated by the Municipal Code (Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 2) as such any exterior modifications (or interior if any interior is designated) shall be approved by the City, this includes but is not limited to modifications to any windows or doors, removal or replacement of any exterior surfaces (i.e. paint, stucco, wood siding, brick), any alterations to the roof or roofing material, alterations to any exterior ornamentation and any additions or significant changes to the landscape/ site.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Historical Resources Board based its designation of the Henry and Myrtle Dahn/A.L. And A.E. Dennstedt Building Company House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style and retains integrity from its 1936 period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits an asymmetrical façade, half barrel clay tile roof, exposed rafters, round clay tile attic vents, stucco chimney, focal window, wooden corner windows, a turned wood column, and stucco facades. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of Master Builder A.L. and A.E. Dennstedt Building Company and retains integrity from its 1936 period of significance. Specifically, the resource is representative of a notable example of the company's residential work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style with custom features such as a turned wood column porch support, a corner window accentuated by a faux wood post, and a faux chimney. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of the foregoing, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego hereby approves the historical designation of the above named property. The designation includes the parcel and exterior of the building as Designated Historical Resource **Site No. 0**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall include the original detached garage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Secretary to the Historical Resources Board shall cause this resolution to be recorded in the office of the San Diego County Recorder at no fee, for the benefit of the City of San Diego, and with no documentary tax due.

Vote:

BY: _____
KRISTI BYERS, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: HEATHER FERBERT,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,
Deputy City Attorney